

Hi my name is _____ and this is the 8th principle minute. With the adoption of the 8th Principle, our congregation committed to dismantle racism, beginning within our walls.

As we work to dismantle racism in our institution, we are continuing our exploration of the attributes of White Supremacy Culture. Today we will look at either/or thinking.

This simplistic approach positions issues as “either/or” - good or bad, right or wrong, with us or against us.

The idea that neither is valid, or both are equally valid and no choice needs to be made, does not seem to enter into the equation. This is closely linked to last week’s topic, perfectionism, because binary thinking makes it difficult to learn from mistakes. Either/or thinking is used as a means of driving an agenda without real debate or consensus building, and it has been used rather effectively to divide, by pitting different oppressed groups against each other.

Antidotes for this are available to us:

- When two, seemingly opposing positions are presented as the only options, intentionally step back, validate both and identify more alternatives.
- When binary thinking and a sense of urgency are coupled, stop. Make the time to restate the goal and really dig into the alternatives.
- Don’t make decisions under extreme pressure.
- Acknowledge the ways in which oppressions intersect, and reinforce each other, reject being forced to choose between oppressions or prioritize one over another.

Together we will continue this journey toward spiritual wholeness, build a beloved community, educate ourselves and discuss what it means to develop a culture of being accountably anti-racist. We will continue to look at our own practices, identity, and stories with a new lens to dismantle the racism in ourselves and our institutions.

<https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/characteristics.html>
https://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/preserve/museums/files/White_Supremacy_Culture.pdf

